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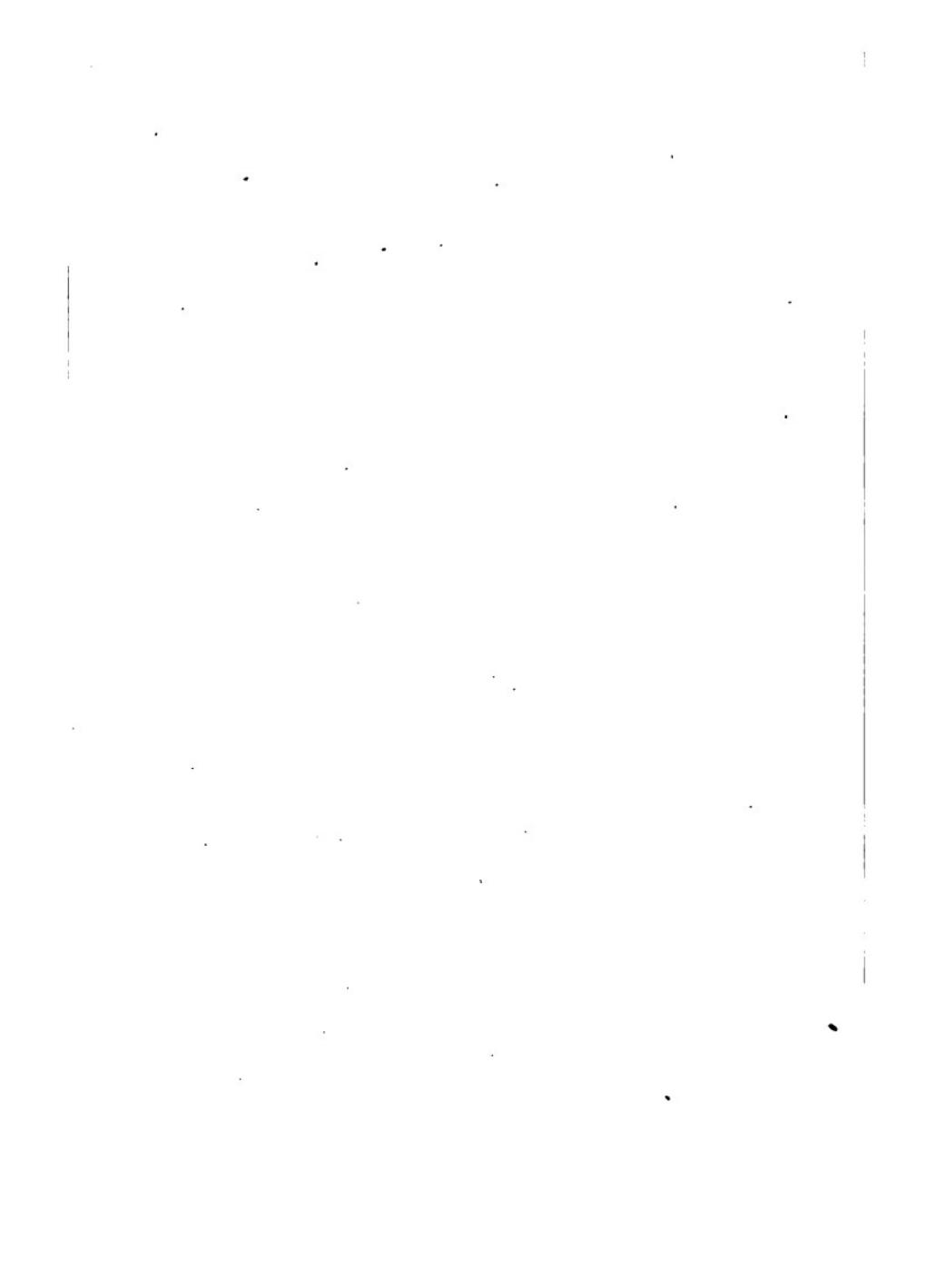
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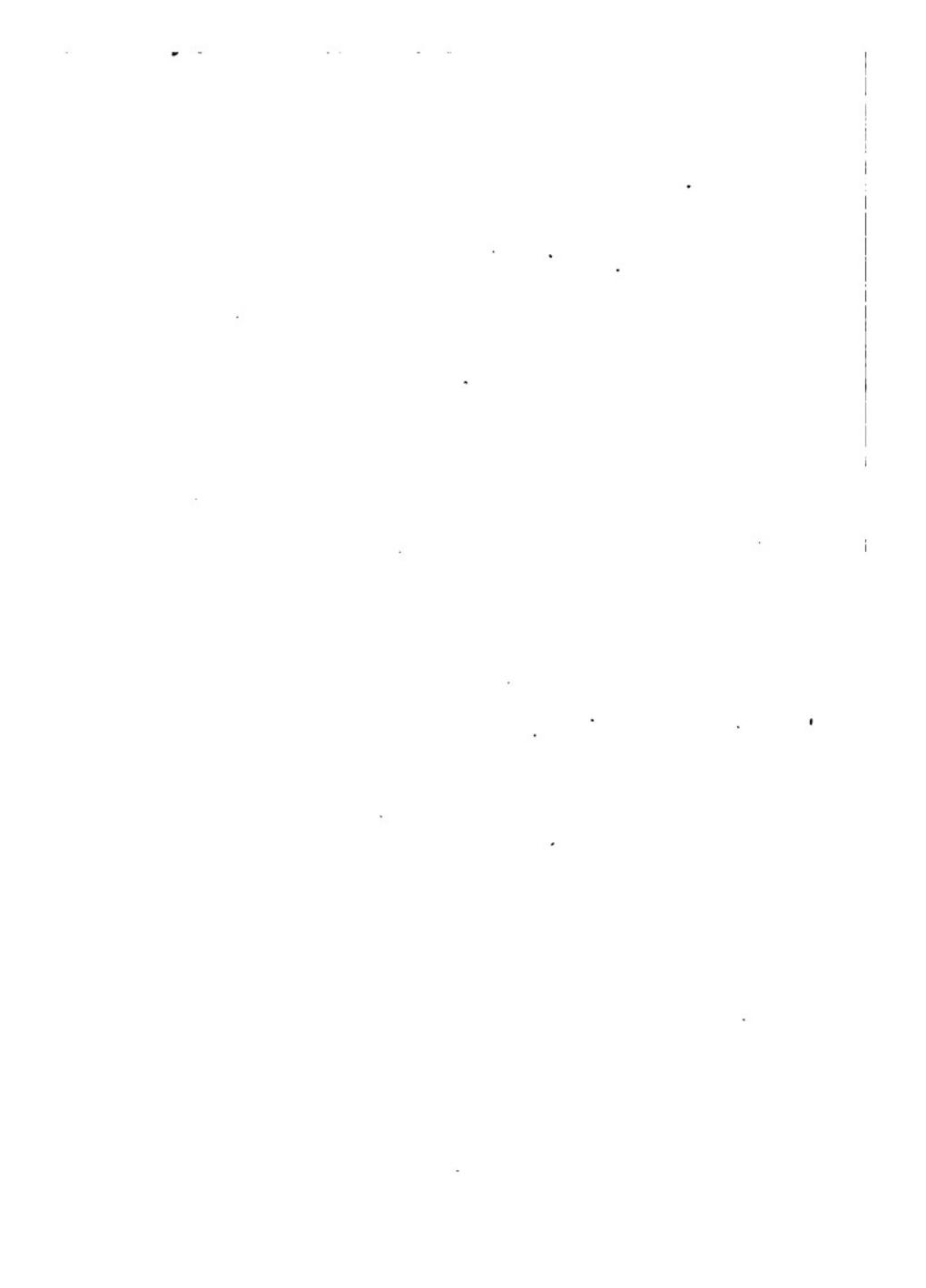


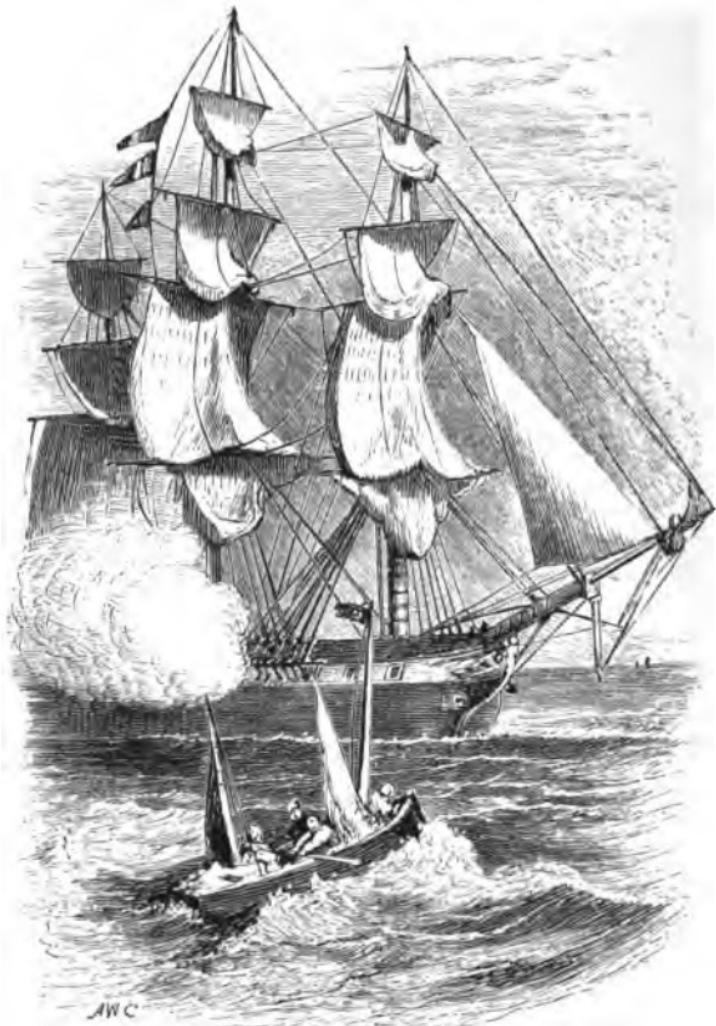
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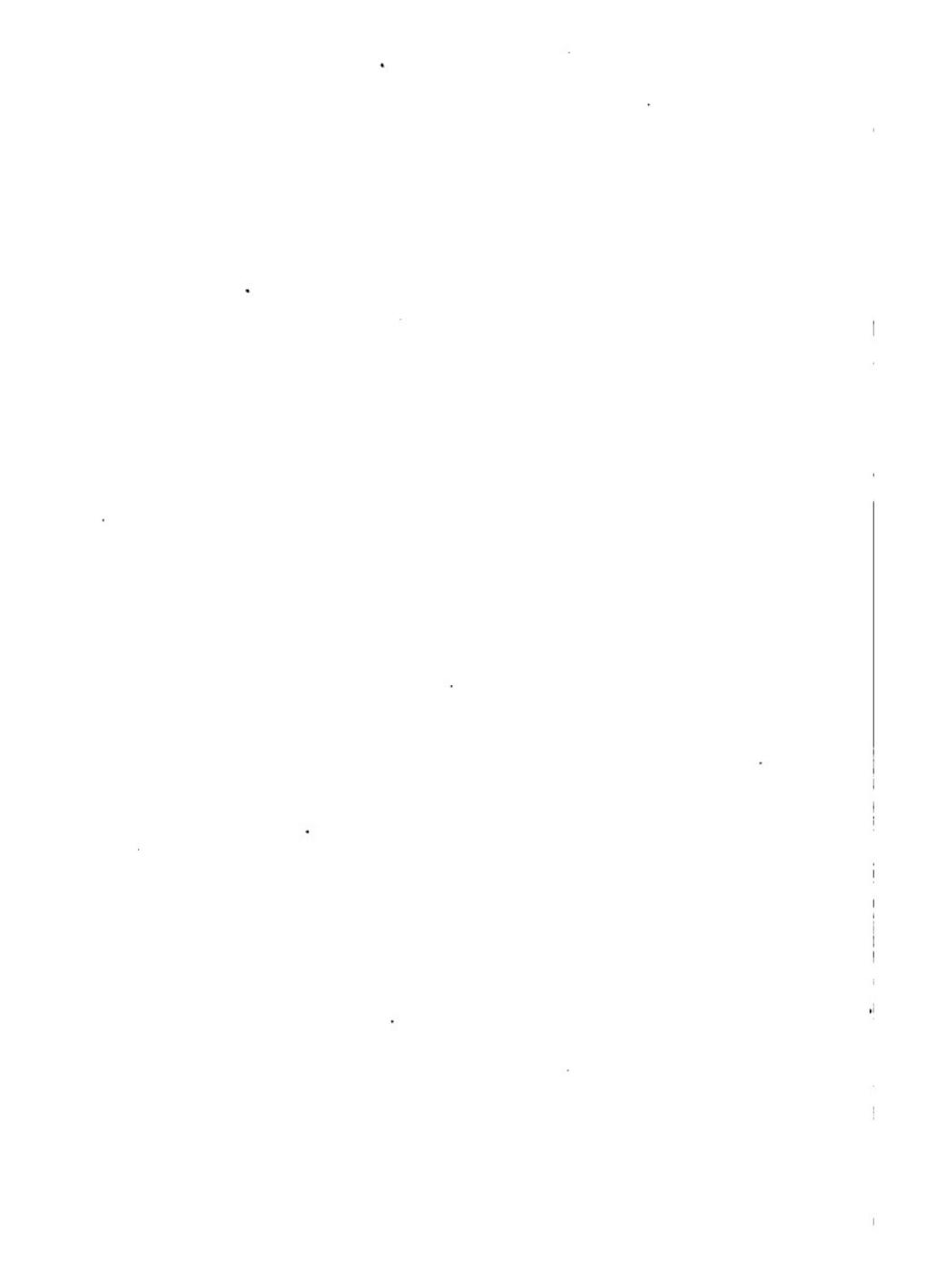
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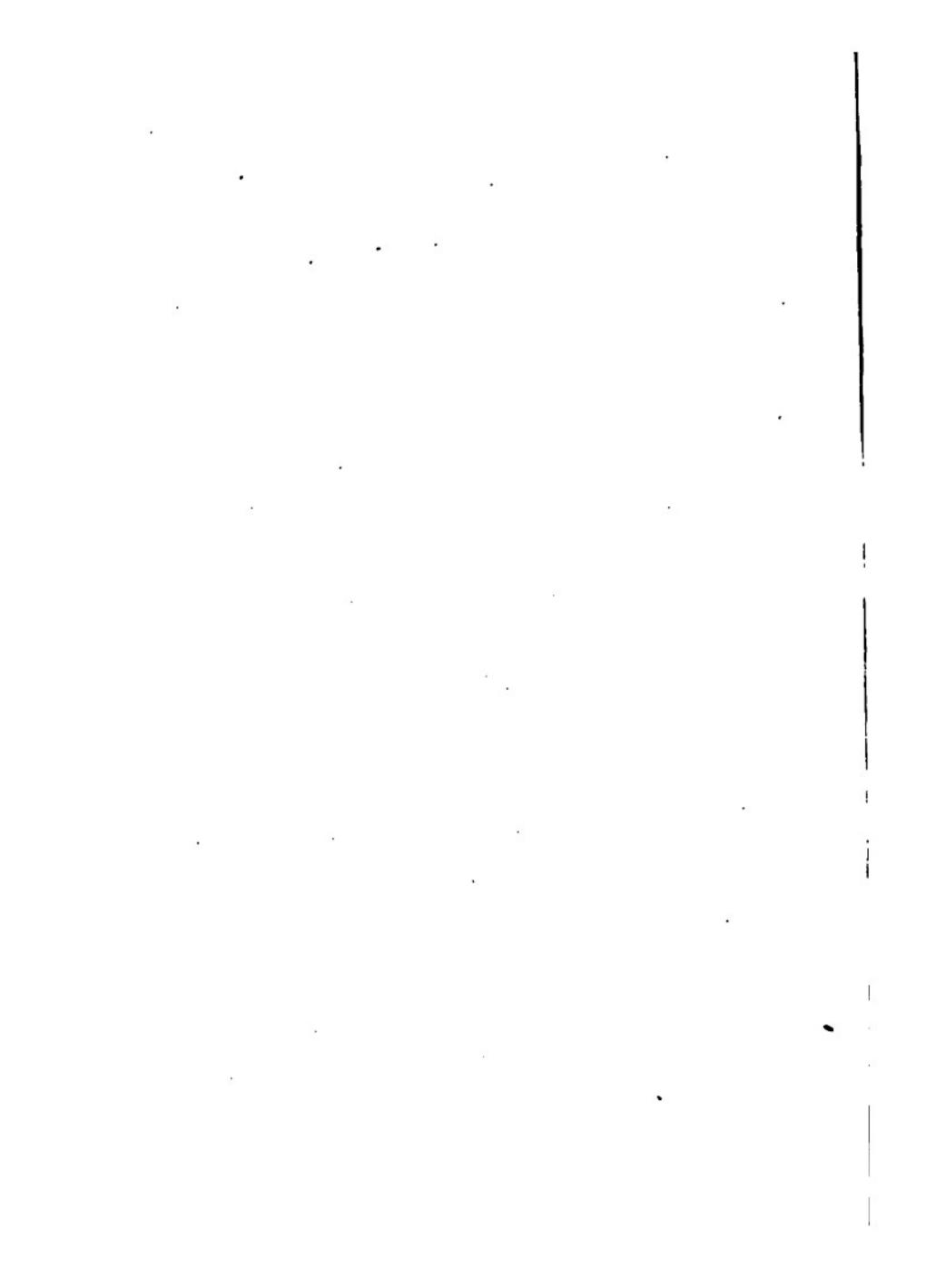
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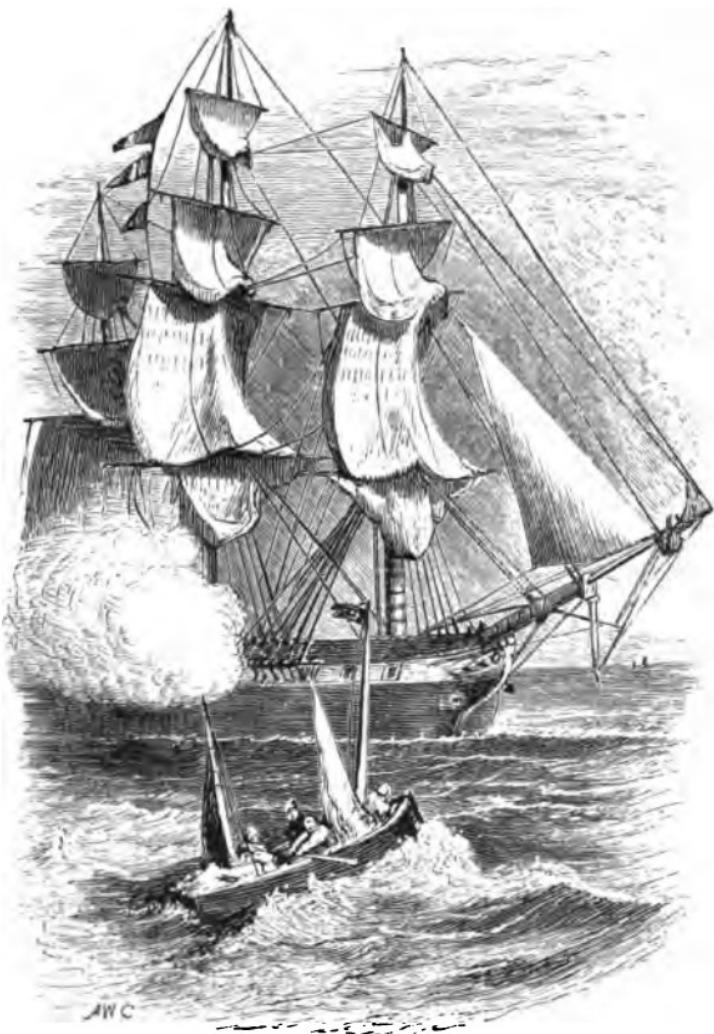
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GONZALEZ

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CHAPTER II.

“SWALLOW SWALLOW, FLYING NORTH!”

I CARRIED my little foundling to my abode, which was formed of a log roofing over a natural cleft in the low flat rock sloping up from the sea, evidently the work of an earthquake in times gone by. At first he was very quarrelsome, struggling vigorously to get free, and pecking at my finger with no small spite and sharpness. I placed him accordingly, in order to tame his pretty ferocity, in an old boot, covered with a piece of a broken pitcher, while I ate my yam and bread-fruit, and drank my draught of cocoanut milk.

On examining my friend, at the close of my repast, my first impression was one of relief on finding that his crop was full, pro-

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time removed the fragment of the hook by cutting slightly the cartilage in which it was fixed. All symptoms of enmity on the part of my patient vanished when I began to doctor him. He soon learned to take spiders and small beetles from my hand, and shared some of the pulpy portions of my vegetable food.

I cannot describe my sensations when he indulged in his first twitter of thanksgiving. It was as if an angel had sung a snatch of some heavenly song. His little eyes met mine, and it seemed as if a new sense was given to me. I could not translate it into words, but his heart spoke to mine; and what is more, God spoke to me by him. And so he would perch on my shoulder and trill away his rapid running little stave for minutes together; and then, as his wing grew stronger, he would circle round and round my head, and dart from side to side after the flies, always, however, returning to my finger or my shoulder when his airy exercise was over.

I could not translate his song into words, I said. Whenever, in the longing of my lonely heart, I questioned him of the land he had left, and of the loved ones whom I fancied he might have seen, his answers were provokingly indistinct. I could have believed he was telling me:—"They are all as cruel there as you were, it was they who caused me all my suffering; they have forgotten you altogether, and scarcely even mention your name. Juanita? She is in a convent; what have you to do with her any longer? I shall go there again one of these days, shall I take any message to them from you?"—and a score of other such scraps and fragments which lifted me up to the skies in the buoyancy of imagination, or made me sink to the depths of agonising despair.

But, at other times, his tiny utterances came to me as a still small voice indeed, yet as an echo of a deeper and more thrilling one. When I ceased to question him about that which was hidden, perhaps for ever, from my ken, and let my heart's ear lie open to receive what it

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was intended I should hear, there was no longer indistinctness or confusion. I had read before this, often and attentively, out of Pedro's Spanish Testament, but the Book was in a measure sealed to me.

One of the first passages, not unnaturally brought to mind by the voice of my swallow, was this—"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. Fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." And again—"Behold the fowls of the air . . . your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"

Many other words of comfort did this little messenger of mercy speak to my spirit. It was true in some sense that I heard just what I was in the mood to hear. But the more I think of it, the more I am convinced that his song tallied with the Scriptures, not only because I fancied so, but because they came from the same God, and that same God had ordained both to be the instruments of my instruction.

And then—of course it must come at last, and it came—the dusky cloud overhead, the many-voiced twitter from the band of sable brethren, the joyous answering cry from my prisoner, the long battle in his affectionate heart between instinct and friendship, my own battle no less strong—and, in a few moments, I had thrown him high upwards from my open palm, and he was lost among his welcoming comrades.

Once more I was alone.

CHAPTER III.

CORAL WORK, AND MAN'S WORK.

MY swallow was gone, and for a few days I missed him sadly. Each hour, however, as it passed, weakened the feeling of regret, and helped me to rejoice in the thought that I had saved the life of a living creature, and restored it to the happiness for which it was created.

Deeper than this I did not then go; but often since, as Christ and His salvation have become more clear and more precious to my heart, have I learned much from the remembrance of my foundling. My soul the castaway swallow, Jesus my rescuer and restorer,—these thoughts darting through my mind have again and again set me in tune, when life and my spirit were at discord. They have been a sermon to me, and changing

what little wants alteration in the lesson, I doubt if I shall ever get much beyond its teaching.

I have said or hinted already that I was born and bred a disciple of the Church of Rome. I have not yet had the opportunity of declaring my change of opinions. It may please God I never should. I know so little of Protestant Churches in the world that I should be in some hesitation as to the body into which I would desire to be received. In the meantime, while I abandon the title Roman, I cling to the name Catholic. Speck as I am upon the face of the globe, I may not, will not doubt that through faith in Jesus Christ I am a member of His Church Universal. And till He send me out again among my fellows, or take me to Himself, things are of more importance than names. He and I, and the Father and the Spirit, are realities enough for a mortal lifetime.

In looking back over the past few years, and endeavouring to trace the steps by which I have, as I trust, been led into the truth of

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God, I find it very difficult to explain or account for the process. All has been so gradual, and there has been so constantly an ebb and flow in my religious experience, that all I can say is, I can no more describe it myself than the blind man or his parents could satisfy the chief priests about his cure. I attribute the change in all reverence and humility to the Blessed Spirit, and to Pedro's Testament. Beyond this I can only say—“Who hath opened my eyes I know not. By what means I now see, I know not. One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.”

I can well remember, however, a time of deep melancholy which came over me, after I had recovered from the loneliness consequent upon the release of my companion. I have mentioned that there were signs on my island of the effects of an earthquake. Probably more than one had visited it in times long gone by. The whole of it, with the exception of a strip of land fringing the western bay, had evidently been thrown up above the level

of the sea by the eruption of volcanic fires from beneath. In fact, in the course of my rambles, I discovered two clearly marked craters, happily for me no longer working, but enough to show what had taken place there formerly. The strip along the bay just alluded to was the most fertile on the island ; ferns, cocoa-nuts, palm trees, and many other tropical plants and trees thrived there luxuriantly.

It was not till some time had passed after reaching the island, that I found out the nature of this western bay. The water was so clear, that in exploring on my raft, I saw at once that it was the work of the coral insects, who had made use of the volcanic rock far down as the foundation for their works, and had constructed, in process of time, upon this side of the coast, a long belt of coral. Their own operations never rise above low water mark. But upon all except the outer slope next the sea, a light warm soil had gradually formed, and out of this had sprung up, from seeds dropped by birds, or fruits washed on shore by the tide, the ric'

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mixture of garden and forest which added such beauty to its appearance.

I often mused on the cleverness and untiring activity of these little workers ; but it was not till I had one day examined a piece of coral under a glass, taken for the purpose from my telescope, that I understood the marvellous curiosities of their labour. It was then that my mind began to look back upon itself, and upon my past and present life. I seemed to hear a hymn of devotion and praise rising up from the myriads of tiny beings so busily fulfilling their end, and an echo woke up within my breast—"Thou favoured above us all, thou ! what hast thou done ? For what end wast thou placed in this world ? and how art thou fulfilling thy destiny ?"

This it was which made me wretched—more wretched in some respects than during the first months of my exile, when I had not arisen from my state of dull, insensible torpor. I had become reconciled to my lot ; I had felt a glimmer of hope, and a sense of

the divine favour had come over me. Now all was clouded over again. Let me try and recount to myself the way in which I was brought out of the gloom.

CHAPTER IV.

GROPING IN THE DARK.

THE first thought which fastened itself on my mind after looking at the coral through my magnifier was, "What has been *my* work?" Hitherto I had been tolerably well satisfied with myself, looking on my life as a whole. To be sure there were things to be ashamed of in the days of my childhood and youth, but these were, for the most part, out of sight, out of mind. And as for the mistakes, neglects, and sins of my riper life, I was accustomed to make large allowance in my own favour, persuading myself that the circumstances in which I was placed were more to blame than I was myself, when I had spoken or acted wrongly.

I now felt the hollowness of this manner of

excuse, and further became impressed with the fact that sin does not cease to be sin because we have forgotten it. I realised, as I had never done before, that God is a God of order, a God of beauty; One whose plan is perfect, and into whose plan it is in our power to enter, and work out our portion heartily and happily, or from whose purpose we may start aside, and thereby mar His good counsel towards us. What I might at other times have considered my good deeds, gave me no more satisfaction now than my wrong ones had given me pain before.

My next impulse was to turn to those sources of comfort, which were supplied by the religion in which I had been brought up. I had been but an irregular attendant at mass; and, even had I been in the habit of receiving more frequently what I then looked upon as the actual Body of the blessed Lord, I doubt whether my mind would have rested long upon it as a means of quieting my conscience. For although I believed that the eating of that holy food cleansed me *for*

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a time, yet I saw nothing in it to keep me perfectly holy, save making it my only food.

I thought of the absolution solemnly pronounced by the priest. But I could scarcely recall an occasion on which the confession, which I was bound by my religion to make before receiving absolution had been thoroughly penitent or sincere. So my consolation from past absolutions was slight ; and now, when I felt I could have poured out my soul in deep contrition, and with earnest desires of forgiveness and amendment, there was no minister at hand, into whose ear I could unfold my tale.

Being laid up about this time by an intermittent fever, which added to the melancholy state of my feelings, I tried to reconcile my mind to the thought of struggling on as best I could through the sorrow and uncertainty in this life, waiting till the pains of purgatory should make me fit to be in the presence of God and the holy angels hereafter. I remembered with regret the many times when I had carelessly passed by opportunities of

shortening those days or years of purgatory, which now stood out in the dim distance as the goal for which I must make. How often had I observed with indifference, and at times with scorn, a notice on the top of some way-side cross, or above a cathedral door, telling me that in reward for repeating a prayer or two on such a hallowed spot, or paying a visit to such a sacred shrine, I might be set free, by a gracious indulgence, from twenty, forty, or sixty days of purgatorial chastening. Alas! there were no holy crucifixes, no martyr's shrine, or tomb of saints on this my lonely island.

And yet perhaps God in His mercy would, I thought, grant me this remission, for the sake of some of those holy deeds of charity and self-denial which had been wrought by saints of old. I would pray to them, at least, to intercede for me. They who had done so much, and suffered so nobly, must, indeed, have power to prevail on my behalf.

And then came the remembrance of the coral-workers; and the question crept up in

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my mind, like the first fog over the evening marsh: "What and if they too were imperfect workers; full of failures, like thyself? Did they fulfil their life-work to the glory of Him who made them? Were there no flaws and breakings, no jarrings and impurities?" "I will go to the foremost of them," I said; "I will inquire of our own holy father, St. Peter. He, if any, won heaven by his holiness, and left somewhat to spare for me." So I seized my little Testament, to settle the point of my salvation.

CHAPTER V.

CAN THE SAINTS SAVE ME ?

I DILIGENTLY searched through my Testament for all and every notice of St. Peter. I followed his course onward from his call, through the whole of his life in Galilee and Judea, till I lost sight of him in the History of the Apostles and their Doings. I read with mixed feelings. I looked for a ready-made and finished saint ; I found a man and a brother—a man in many respects far above me, and worthy of all loving imitation, but still a brother, sharing much of my weakness and ignorance, and in one great instance falling far, I will not say below me, but far below the lofty standard I had formed for the Peter of my fancy, below even ordinary respect. I gained, and I lost. I lost the feeling of com-

fort I had enjoyed in resting on the apostle's excellence, in looking for his help and favour, in asking the aid of his intercessions. I lost, to some extent, the belief in goodness at all, or at any rate in its continuance and sincerity, when I found the father of the Church rebuked for "savouring not the things that be of God, but those that be of men;" thrice denying his Lord, and afterwards afraid to act boldly and truthfully before his brethren. (Gal. ii. 11.)

But I gained a sense of companionship, of which I had no experience before, a reality in place of a notion. It was as if I had gazed upon what seemed to me a marble statue, and had found by its warm touch and friendly voice that it was a living man like myself.

Yet though struck by the strong devotion of Peter to his Divine Master, and seeing, as I could not help seeing, from his life and his epistles, that he looked to none other for his salvation, I did not immediately give up the ground I had been holding so long. My notions of the Son of man had been so dwarfed

and perverted, that I could not, without much unlearning of my old self, and much teaching from the Spirit of Truth, come to believe in Him rightly. St. Peter was gone from the shrine where I had been wont to give him worship, and with him went all the lesser train of saints. But there was still one, who stood upon a different footing, who was it seemed as far above Peter as Peter was above me—Mary, the blessed among women, the Mother of God, the source of holiness and purity, the turner aside of the wrath of the Lamb.

I had always been soothed and elevated by the contemplation of the Virgin. If religion in my thoughtless days had any hold upon me, it was when it came to me in connection with her: and an “Ave Maria” always came from my heart, while my “Pater Nosters” were, I fear, a matter of the lip. Now when prop after prop of my old faith seemed giving under me, I clung with more passionate fondness than ever to what seemed my last stay. “Never,” I cried, “will I sur-

render thee, holy Virgin. I will sooner perish than dishonour thee!"

It was not easy to me, weak as I was with fever, and with poor contrivances for writing, to follow out these subjects carefully, and note down what was said upon each in the several passages bearing upon them. But at last I accomplished with regard to the mother of our Lord what I had followed out with His apostle, and had before me a life, or rather the hints of a life, as far as the Scriptures give the material. At first my early convictions were strengthened, and I exulted in the honour bestowed by men and angels on the chosen among all women. And as I read further, and found one and another allusion, I could not help reading them in the light of my feelings, and through the glory which tradition has given to her name.

When I came to the last mention of Mary, and had given up the vain search for what I fully expected to find, viz., an account of her being received up miraculously into heaven, together with notices of her intercession for

sinners, and instances of their prayers being addressed to her, I felt arrested, and urged on to a deeper examination of the history. I would not give up the stories which I had previously received as facts; but I put them aside from my collection of actual truths about her, and read these through carefully again as impartially as I could. At the same time I prayed, "O Jesus, who lovest Thy mother, make me rightly to think of her."

The issue was very different from what I had expected. I found a genuine and noble daughter of David indeed, but no Mother of God, teaching, sanctifying, interceding; a loving, holy, and blessed woman, mother of "that in Christ," which was human and belonging to the flesh, but weak as a child in the things belonging to the Spirit. If—I reasoned to myself—Mary was told by our Lord at twelve years old what she had to expect from Him; if she was checked by Him at Cana in Galilee for seeming even to suggest to Him His duty; if she was pro-

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claimed by Him before the multitude of His disciples as no longer anything peculiar to Him in the way of *motherhood*, but as one who must take her position among others of His believing followers—she is not, she cannot be the mistress, the Queen of Heaven!

A star had fallen from my Heaven—but the Day-star was beginning to rise in it.

CHAPTER VI.

SUNSHINE IN THE HEART.

I AM dwelling perhaps tediously on this part of my history; but this illness was so blessed to me that I cannot too earnestly desire to strengthen the impression of it on my mind. And this will be most effectively done by tracing the course of my thoughts in this my journal of the past.

The stars disappeared one by one from the heaven of my early faith. But the Sun arose in His strength, and, indeed, I felt "healing in His wings." How slowly, yet majestically, He grew upon me, that sleeping infant of Bethlehem! I need not say that before the time of my being cast on the island, I might say even till the time of my illness, I had realised little either of the Godhead or of the

Manhood of Christ. To me Jesus was, to all intents and purposes, a "Bambino," an innocent, a holy, but an eternal *Child*. The Mother had absorbed my devotion; the Son was an interesting object in her arms.

Or if I had at times reached up to the belief that He was indeed a holy and a miracle-working man, (though this latter quality could scarcely exalt Him much above the hosts of other saints, modern and ancient, who, as I learned, had performed equal or greater wonders,) my feelings had taken two directions, neither of them at variance with, but each stopping short of, the truth.

These were pity for the sufferings of one so unfortunate and oppressed; and fear, an occasional but decided fear of, and shrinking from, the displeasure with which I was taught to believe He regarded me. Love, I considered, had nothing to do with Jesus of Nazareth. It was the mark and distinguishing feature of the gentle compassionate Mary, while justice and severity alone dwelt in the bosom of her Son.

I cannot tell how the Light of life shone in upon my soul, any more than I can tell how the darkness of midnight has changed into the glory of noon. I cannot mark the steps, but I can feel the difference. Again and again I read the Gospels, each time using the little prayer which Pedro had written on the fly-leaf, "O God! for Jesus Christ's sake, give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may understand and profit by Thy Holy Scriptures. Amen." I lived in a new world, and I thought nothing could exceed the happiness I felt in contemplating the beauty and the love of Christ.

It was not however till I had once more, and in a different spirit from that in which I had first looked into them, read the Epistles attentively, and gathered from the Acts of the Apostles the light in which they regarded the Redeemer of mankind, that I saw even Christ aright. Now Peter and Paul and James and John stood to me in their true position. The Lord Jesus towered above them all, and I could hail them as men and brothers. But

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so little of what my Lord had taught was preserved for us in the Gospels, and so little of that comparatively was about Himself and the "*Why*" of His life and its circumstances, that I should have missed half its meaning, had they not interpreted it for me.

It was a dark time to me, to be sure, when I was reading St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, much of which was less easy to me to enter into from my having no Old Testament by my side, with which to compare his allusions. His teaching about sin and judgment for a time stirred up the opposition of my heart, and then clouded me over with doubt and heaviness of spirit as I first refused to confess myself, and then indeed discovered that I was a sinner, an outlaw from my God. But this was one of God's clouds, "which drop fatness." My knowledge of Jesus derived from the Gospels, as the Son of God and Man, the Restorer of life and health, the Rebuker of sin, and the Speaker of consolation, was but the threshold to my further knowledge of Him as the

Bearer of Sin, the atonement for *my* guilt, the end of the Law to *me* for, and raising me to righteousness, which the Spirit made clear to me through the teaching of the heaven-taught apostles.

Thank God for that illness which was a new epoch in my life. I could now say "Our Father," with a meaning it never had to me before.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SUBMARINE VOLCANO.

I HAVE indulged myself too long, perhaps, in recalling the progress of my inner life. Few incidents have happened to ruffle the smooth course of my island life, beyond the changes of season, to which I am now accustomed, with the accompanying variations among birds, flowers, and insects, which have given me so much delight and instruction. But one event I must not omit from my diary, as it threatened to set me altogether free from my imprisonment, though in a manner unexpected and solemn.

Towards the close of one hot season the air became unusually sultry and oppressive. There were no thunder-clouds, but constant peals were heard in the distance; and the

lightning played about the horizon almost all night long. One day about noon, as I was floating along in my little home-made canoe about a mile and a half from the shore, I was aroused from a state of drowsiness into which I had fallen under the heavy influence of the atmosphere, by a low but increasingly audible noise coming, as it seemed, from the very depths of the caverns of ocean. I could feel it was not thunder; and my opinion was soon confirmed by a strange uneven swell, which I noticed the more particularly, because hitherto the sea had been as still as the fish-ponds of the Alhambra, the tide drifting me along with a motion I could only perceive by now and then observing the altered position of the trees and rocks on the shore.

Nor was there now any sign even of the most gentle breeze, which could account for the disturbance of the waters. I was tossed to and fro in my little bark, as the swell changed to a chopping restless agitation, and I had to use all my skill to keep her

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head to the shore, for which I made in earnest.

I had not made more than a quarter of the distance, when the low rumbling moan behind me rose into a confused rushing sound, as of a commencing avalanche, broken by sudden and terrible explosions as from the heart of the sea. The appalling roar which followed forced me to turn round in horror, at the risk of swamping my canoe. It swerved round, at the same time, and brought me face to face with a scene which I cannot now recall without a shudder, and which no words can approach.

As if from the mouth of a gigantic field-piece planted below the surface of the sea, there was pouring upward into the air a volume of dark matter, mingled with streaks of flame and curling wreaths of smoke. What was the nature of this black up-rushing cataract I could not discern with the eye, so rapidly did the column shoot up into the lurid air; but from the sound of heavy substances falling back into the sea, and the hissing which

accompanied their sinking into the deep, I could tell, without a doubt, that fragments of rock, and showers of stone and cinder, were being whirled aloft toward the sky.

Of course it was clear enough afterwards that a volcano had burst out, as had often been the case in years long past, below the level of the sea. But at the time there was no room for thought. The spectacle was sublime, and at the moment I could neither reason about it, nor look forward to consequences. Besides, the eruption having taken place only as far as I could judge some three miles from the spot where I was at the time, and between four and five from my island, it was but a very short time before the enormous rush of water caused by the sudden upheaving of the earth, and the forming of a new crater, came seething and foaming towards me.

I now awoke to the peril of my situation. Two deaths were before me—the waters were hungering to swallow me up, and the scorching volleys of artillery which sent their un-forged bolts up hundreds of feet into the air

threatened to reach me before I could gain a retreat, and stun me or sink my boat.

Yet I was not panic-struck. At first there was a wild unruly spirit of opposition which led me to defy the elements, and invite them to try their worst. I rebuked this feeling, and by degrees came to realise my real position as a child in his Father's bosom, bidden to behold something of that Father's terrible omnipotence.

Surging backward on the tide, I made no effort but to keep my canoe's head toward the crater, preparing myself for the shock when, as I expected, I should be dashed upon the shore of my island. Finding no such shock, I glanced to one side, and found to my surprise and alarm that I was rapidly sweeping past it. A back current had met us and taken me out of the direct course in which I had been carried, and the shores of the island were at the time my eye caught them standing high out of the water, as I had never seen them even at the lowest tide.

I committed myself to my Saviour, remem-

bering with the deepest thrill of interest His words to Peter on the lake : "Oh, thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt ?"

And now a terrible darkness came down upon the scene. I had noticed a sulphurous cloud forming densely above the spot where the volcano commenced, gradually spreading wider and wider till it had taken the appearance of a huge unearthly umbrella. The sounds of explosion had ceased, nor could I hear the plunging and splashing of the stones and cinders, but the smell became almost suffocating, and a quantity of ashes and small dust was drifting across the sky.

I had been taught to believe in the existence of a state in which every soul, of good and bad alike, would have to undergo a purifying, even in a furnace of fire, before they could draw nigh unto the living God. The thought fastened itself on my senses, Is this the entrance upon Purgatory ? What if I be doomed to circle round this terror-inspiring spot for years, for ages to come, constantly in death, but never destroyed, experiencing

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the just penalty of my sins, and not suffered to escape until I have paid the uttermost farthing? My mind might well reel at the imagination; but it was only a momentary utterance of the old unenlightened self within me. I laid hold on the words—"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and I could have smiled or slept in that assurance.

What exactly followed I know not. I must have been swamped in some back-wave or eddy while in a state of stupefaction. The water probably saved my life. All I know is that I found myself some hours later washed upon a new promontory of my old island, so altered in its shape and outline that I could scarcely recognise it. I was uninjured, but faint and chilled. The cloud had passed away, and the sun was rising, while only a straight line of vapour ascending from a small cone above the sea marked the scene of yesterday's display. I knelt and gave thanks for my escape, and set out for my old abode.

CHAPTER VIII.

GONZALEZ A FAMILY MAN.

ABOUT a fortnight had passed since my surprise and providential escape from the eruption of the submarine volcano. The first impressions were beginning to wear off, but I think I may honestly say I was returning more thankfully and more healthfully to the duties, such as I felt them to be, of that life from which I had so nearly been snatched away. I had made new plans for the spending of my time, allotting so many hours to gardening and the training of fruit-trees about the new cabin which I had almost completed, so many hours to fishing, and the practice or use of my home-made bow and arrows, so many to the study of my only Book, and writing for my own benefit expla-

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nations of more difficult passages. It was a great comfort that poor Pedro's box contained a good amount of writing paper, on which he had intended to describe his adventures, though his little stock of ink was much dried up, and my own manufacture exceedingly faint and thin.

I was beginning, moreover, to amuse myself with filling and watching a small pool, formed in a hollow of the rock during the late eruption, and making a curious home for all kinds of vegetable and animal wonders. I found myself, too, once more yearning after the poetry and music on which my early years had been so richly fed; and manufacturing a rude guitar out of an open shell and some strings cut from the membrane of a dried fish, I half-bashfully, half-bravely, struck out some songs, which I daresay I shall forget or be ashamed to perform, if I ever meet society again.

A fortnight, as I said, had thus passed, when an occurrence took place which opened a new life to me, and which I shall always consider as a signal token of "loving-kind-

ness and tender mercy" from Him who watched over me in my loneliness.

I had slept somewhat later than usual, and after my various little before-breakfast duties, was feeling rather behind-hand and dull in taking my regular morning stroll to the look-out rock above my nest, when I heard over the brow of the low cliff in front of me a kind of melancholy dirge-like chant, in which I could at once detect three distinct parts and, I imagined, at least twice as many voices. I hurried up the intervening slope and beheld with trembling amazement a long narrow canoe, paddled by about a dozen dark forms, moving from the shore beneath steadily out to sea.

To shout, perhaps more correctly I should say to shriek wildly, to the occupants of the retreating bark, to scramble blindly down the well-known cliff, happily not above 15 or 20 feet high, to stride over the sandy beach, and first to wade, then to swim frantically in the wake, I cared not whether of friends or foes, was the work of a few hot, but ere long icily-chilled moments. Poor creatures, of course,

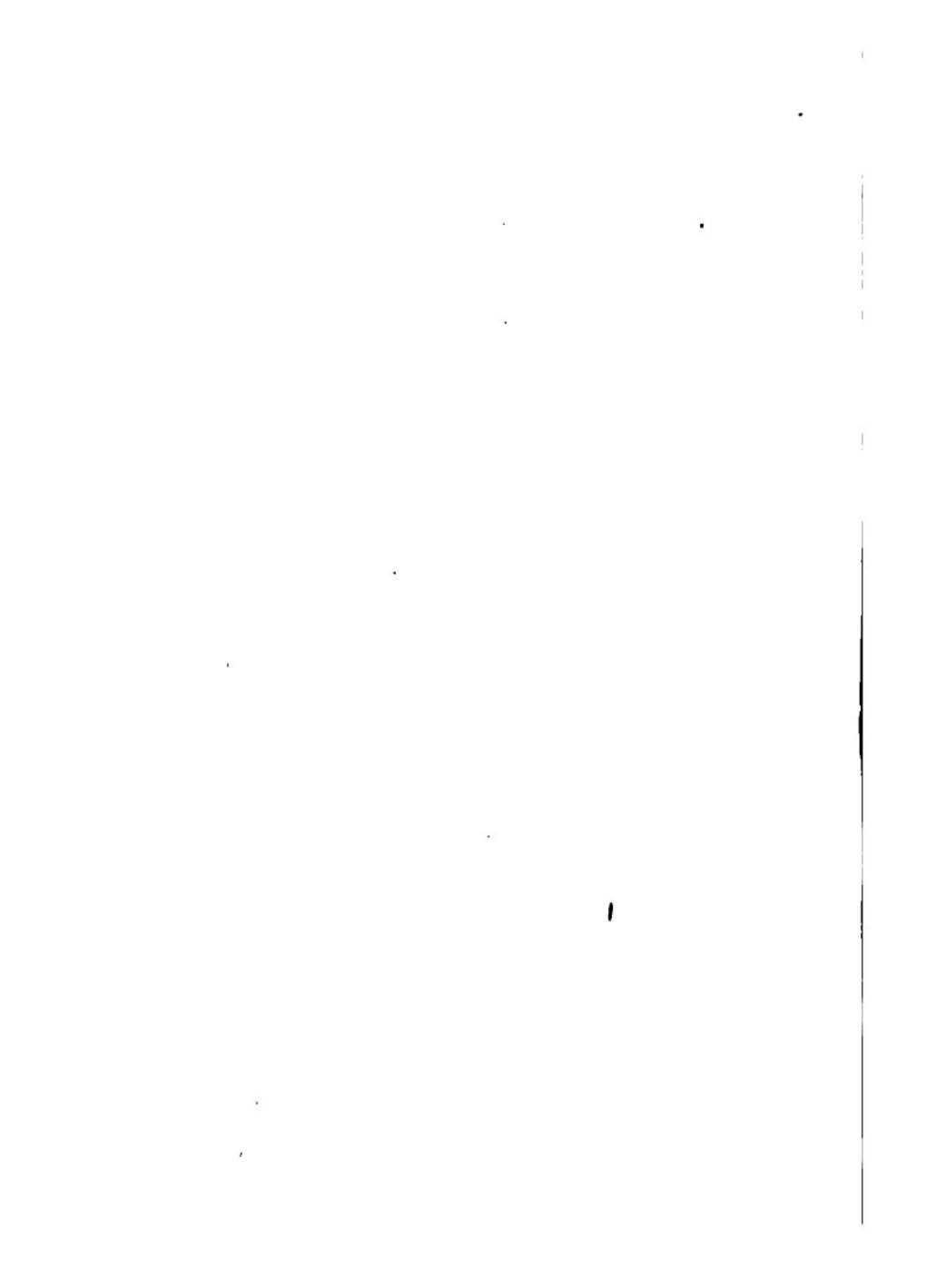
they took me for the very God of the volcano, whose wrath I have no doubt they had made a special voyage to appease. There was no time then to reason. A thousand thoughts and hopes and fears flashed through my mind as I saw them fade into a black speck upon the waves, picking up as they went what appeared to be the provision boat, left at anchor for a time at some little distance from shore.

Dripping and disconsolate I stepped again on the beach, and was turning heavily towards my house, now more desolate than ever, when the bleat of a goat, or some such animal, struck strangely on my ear, and reminded me of the fact that while I slept that morning other feet had landed, and had left I knew not what trace it might be of their visit behind them.

A four-footed companion of any shape would have been a boon to me of more value than I can express; but oh, marvel of marvels, there upon the sand I beheld, a few yards away from the side of a reverend-looking goat, a real, live, curly-headed, round-limbed baby, apparently some eighteen months old, play-



GONZALEZ FINDS A CHILD AND GOAT.



ing with the shells at his feet, and spluttering about the sand with his fists.

I had had so little to do with children, since my only brother died in his infancy, that I confess my first feeling was that of stupid, utter helplessness. "What in the world shall I do with it? How shall I feed it and dress it? When will it speak, and think, and do for itself? If it were but a dog, or a cow!"—these were the first words that came to my lips.

I was glad there was no one to read my thoughts, for they were scarcely formed before I was heartily ashamed of them. And when the trustful little fellow crowed out his approval of my approach, and evidently showed intentions of making an immediate and lasting friendship with me, I could not keep the tears from my eyes, so deeply did I feel that the child had been sent for my comfort and training on the one hand; and that on the other I had been appointed as his guardian, to save him from a lingering death, and possibly to be a blessing to him for life and eternity.

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It was pretty clear, on reflection, that the inhabitants of some coast or island, nearer than I had supposed to my retreat, but still I reckoned at least two or three hundred miles away, had heard or seen signs of the eruption, and had made this hazardous voyage to avert further consequences. Finding the low peak which had first been thrown up above the water now scarcely visible even at low water, they had concluded my island to be the abode of the great and terrible deity, and had brought this poor little innocent victim as an offering to secure his favour.

Mercy, it would seem, had softened the severity of their purpose; for the goat, which was in full milk, had been taught during the trip to do the mother for the young urchin as readily as she would have done for her kid. I soon stopped this, as the first piece of moral training for the benefit of the little gentleman, and was rewarded by finding him very accommodating, and ready to suck in through a gull's quill the milk of which I relieved his foster-mother.

Here was a new turn of events indeed! that I should be the father of a family,—I, who in the short time I had been on the island had grown into a sober, if not a gray-headed man,—I who had always looked upon an infant as the greatest mystery in creation, a thing to be looked at, but not to be touched,—I who had again and again pictured out my future career, either to die undiscovered on my coral grave, or, if ever I should rejoin my kind, to startle them as one rising from the dead, to find my Juanita already a matron, or, if she remembered me still, to endure the pang of disclosing to her that my religion was no longer hers, and of knowing she would call me in her heart, what her lips would be too gentle to pronounce, *a heretic*,—it was, for all its seriousness, so positively ridiculous, that I did what I had not done since the days of our last voyage, what I should have declared twenty-four hours before to have been entirely and absolutely impossible,— I looked into the baby's eyes, and fairly burst into a laugh!

CHAPTER IX.

PEDRO THE SECOND.

I WAS now obliged to wake up more thoroughly than I had ever yet done, and enter into the real matters of every-day life. Hitherto, while I had been continually learning to take a more true and healthful view of life, I had yet lived more in the inner world of my own thoughts, than as a member of the outer world. And though I had thus in my fancy made friends of the rocks, the sea, the sky, and felt that I could talk with them and their inhabitants to my own consolation and improvement, I was in danger, I now see, of becoming more of a sleep-walker than a *man*. I had, unknown to myself, been living a kind of double life, the recollections of the past, and the longings for the

future casting cross-lights upon the actual present, and so robbing it of its honest, solid reality. My feet, my hands, my eyes, and ears, touched one set of objects ; my heart, my mind, my self were busy in another sphere.

All this was gently but effectually charmed out of me by the arrival of my little Pedro—yes, my Pedro. I had long arguments with myself as to baptizing him or not. On the one hand I considered that so important and holy a rite should be performed by none but an appointed minister of God ; that there were no witnesses of the ceremony ; and, above all, that to the child himself the most solemn event of his life would be a mere nothing, not only impossible to be understood at the time, but leaving no trace upon the memory to be recalled and deepened in the course of after years. Would it not be better to wait till he should be able to understand the case for himself ; to pray that his heart might early be led to choose the Lord Jesus for his own ; but to leave him the free

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and unfettered choice which was as much his birthirght as my own ?

Then, on the other hand, I found no command in the Testament against the admission of infants into the Covenant, nor any record in the early history of the Church, stating that out of the "households" baptized, one and all together, these little ones had been removed apart, as unfit to be made partakers of the blessing. On the contrary, the infant Jesus Himself, and His kinsman, John the Baptist, had both been received into the older Church when only a week old ; and He, whose mind shiould be our mind, had taken the little ones to His arms, and bestowed on them His divine benediction.

Two things helped to decide me. An old fragment of Latin which I had learned at school came into my mind : "*Summum jus summa injuria*," — that is, "The greatest right (according to the letter) may be the greatest wrong (in spirit and in effect)." It was, I felt in one way, an injustice to

act in a most serious and binding engagement on behalf of a reasonable creature, small and ignorant as he then might be, without his having the slightest opportunity of expressing his feelings on the point. Yet in thus giving him his apparent rights, I knew I should be doing him an equal or a greater wrong by cutting him off in the meantime from those covenant blessings, and that promised teaching of the Holy Spirit, which seemed by the words of Scripture to be so much wrapped up in Baptism.

I also remembered the story of some ancient father, who, finding some boys playing at christening each other upon the seashore, and observing that the one who performed the ceremony used water simply, with the words of invocation, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," decided that the children, whose parents were heathen, had been rightly baptized, and would not have the ceremony performed a second time.

With much prayer, therefore, and in much

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hope, as there was no one else to do it, I with my own hands admitted the little foundling into the outward kingdom of Christ, believing that the forgiveness of sins and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit were as much for him as for myself.

If I had followed the custom of my old Church I should have wanted to see him confirmed at once. But I found in the Testament nothing to make me feel I need distress myself on that matter at present.

I might write pages upon the subject of my interesting little companion, and the various shifts I made to meet the little wants, and fears, and wishes which grew like wild-flowers out of his infantile life. How I had to alter my cabin to make him cosy, how I made three bark cradles to suit him, and then found he had made up his mind to have no cradle at all, how I had much ado to keep him from eating poisonous berries, from tumbling into my live-creature pool among the rocks, from destroying my journal, and throwing my most precious tools, &c., into

some inaccessible hole by the shore—the story of all or a quarter of such adventures and misadventures must be kept till I have nephews and nieces of my own or of Pedro's to amuse on a winter's night. Ah me! shall I ever see any?

I confess I had sometimes to say “as we forgive them that trespass against us” over three several times, with tiny Pedro kneeling beside me, before I could quite get rid of the atom of vexation which his little tricks had caused me.

But I could also tell of the fun we had together, as he grew month by month older and quicker, and showed the instincts and activity of his race. He delighted to ride his old friend the goat, and soon refused to be held on; he scrambled up and down rocks, before he could walk straight on plain ground; and when for a joke one day I dived from under him, as I was taking him for a ride on my back while I swam, to my amazement he struck out his plump little arms and legs as knowingly as the most

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experienced swimmer could have done, and has ever since been equally at home in the water or on land.

Having brought this sketch of my island life pretty well up to this present time, I shall, with the blessing of God, add from day to day such little jottings as seem worth putting down. May He who has shown Himself "the same, yesterday and to-day," also be found of us, as each to-morrow comes, the Saviour and Protector we need.

CHAPTER X.

EXTRACTS FROM MY DIARY.

APRIL 10th, 18—.—This day four years little Pedro was left upon the island. I set him down then as a year and a half old, but I expect I made a mistake: I doubt if he was over twelve months. How should I know? it was the merest guess in the world, and I think he cannot be halfway between five and six yet. I see he has a strong will of his own. May God give me grace to direct it to right ends.

I already begin to learn much from my young charge, much which should humble me, and make adore the patience of Him who has borne with my waywardness. A dozen times a day Master Pedro's will crosses mine, and it is only by casting myself habitually upon the

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higher will of Him who watches over both of us, and asking instantaneously which is the right one, that I avoid unnecessary opposition, or unwise yielding to the child's. Perhaps I have tried to amuse him too much : pleasure seems to be his only thought.

May 27th.—I have been trying what imitation will do towards winning my little man from his extreme rambling and self-pleasing propensities. I have made him a little spade and hoe, and by carefully avoiding compulsion have got him to copy my movements in digging and hoeing my garden. To be sure he spoils my work often enough ; but I am prepared for that, and the fun of the thing and the gain of keeping him out of mischief are quite sufficient compensation.

Another little occupation we pursue together is raking up sea-weed for the garden as the tide washes it on shore, and this is quite in Pedro's line ;—except that he prefers now and then snatching at the weed with his fingers to making use of the rough little rake I made for him. More than once his cries and exclamations in

broken Spanish, which he is beginning to pick up rapidly, have told me just in time that his tool is floating out to sea.

June 17th.—Alas! Pedro's activity and curiosity have cost us dearly. It was but the day following the last recorded in my Diary, when we were collecting weed as before. I had gone round a point of rock, expecting my little companion to come close behind me. It appears that he was struck by a bright red anemone clinging to a rock just below the water, and after trying in vain to get it off with his rake, had reached forward with one hand upon the top of the rock to pull it off with the other. There being a good deal of slippery sea-weed just where his hand rested, the boy slid over head and breast foremost into the deep water beyond. He told me afterwards that he was not frightened, but that he kept himself from crying out, as he would have done from surprise, because he knew he ought not to be so far behind, and did not want me to hear.

The tide was running out fast, and this was

at the head of the bay, so that by the time I had come round the head rock, wondering to receive no answer to my calls, the child, though a wonderfully good swimmer, had been washed down at least half-a-mile, and could get no nearer to shore than 150 or 200 yards. I rushed along the beach in hopes of getting opposite to the poor little fellow before he was drawn under or sunk from exhaustion. He saw me running, and waved one hand bravely, and then made a determined strike in a slanting direction for the shore. He was however quite out of breath, as I too was, with running ; and when still at some distance from the object of my anxiety, I saw him turn and float for a few seconds on his back, and then sink from my sight.

I dashed into the water, and madly struck out for the course in which I thought he would be washed. I could not think or reason, but kept agonising in prayer. He must have got into a counter-current I think—there are many strangely perplexing round the island. Anyhow he rose to

one side, and not so far away as I had calculated. The second time he rose, almost breathless as I was, I had gained on him marvellously. When I came to the spot where I reckoned he must be, though the water was as clear as a mirror, I could not see an inch. Instinctively I plunged down and round, and when about to give up in despair, and think about my own safety, I felt something which was not sea-weed, and clutching it convulsively with my right hand while I swam with my left, I drew to the surface the apparently lifeless body of my little, but tenderly loved companion and friend.

It was not till a full hour had passed from the time when we reached the shore that I saw any signs of life. I was myself more dead than alive. First Pedro suffered from the chill, and when he was better I was laid up with inflammation, from which I am slowly recovering. Still we are safe, and he is more precious to me than ever. I think, too, he feels more attached to me than before. God be praised for this mercy.

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

FRIGATE *Alecto*.—Am I in a dream, or not? The best way to collect my senses is to take up my journal from its now almost forgotten date, and put down briefly what has occurred since then.

It was, according to my reckoning, Sunday (though I found I had somehow made an error in my calculations, and had, not to my regret, a double Sabbath that week),—when, from a retired spot in a slope of palms, where I was intending to read, but was really far off in deep reverie, I heard young Pedro's voice screaming wildly that there was something to be seen; what, I could not understand. I started up, fearing mischief, and reproaching myself for having allowed my

little charge to wander from the grove. He was dancing and flinging his arms about on the top of some rising ground, shouting, "A boat, a boat," and then he turned towards the sea, and imitated my call, a well-known distant signal, and waved his arms, evidently under the persuasion that there was something real, and worth hailing, in view.

I would not believe the possibility of a vessel's being really at hand, lest I should suffer some cruel disappointment, so I walked with perversely deliberate steps up the slope. As Pedro continued calling to me and to the object at sea by turns, it flashed across me that a native craft, similar to that in which he himself had been brought, might be paying a visit to the island. In a moment I was by his side, and what were my emotions on seeing in the glow of the evening sun the unmistakable figure and rig, though some miles yet in the offing, of a European or American vessel.

I could not feel altogether happy at first; it seemed such a solemn thought to be

once more brought into contact with the world from which I had been an exile so long. I felt—but a truce to feelings;—I was brought to my senses by seeing Pedro in the most business-like way bringing leaves, boughs, and dried sea-weed, quite proving himself the right man for the occasion. I was brought in one way to my senses ; but they now overpowered me to such an extent that I caught up the boy in my arms, and in spite of his struggles and demonstration, hugged him till I believe he was almost hurt. Then between laughing and crying I could scarcely help him to make a fire, till the low state to which it speedily fell after the first bright blaze, made me sober enough in a trice. With management, patience, and prayer, we soon made a good fire, and though it was trying to see our unknown friend fade away in the twilight without any signal being made in answer to ours, we had the satisfaction of feeling that the darkness was all the better for our purpose.

It was, I should guess, about an hour be-



GONZALEZ MAKES A FIRE.

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fore midnight, when from the direction in which my eyes were constantly turning appeared a light streak, shooting up into the gloom, followed immediately by a shower of coloured stars. Then another, and another rocket. God be praised, our fire was seen ! With the help of Pedro, who had scorned the notion of being put to bed, I drew in front of the flame an old sail rescued from the wreck, and after holding it a few seconds as a shade, again let the light show. We repeated this a few times, so as to give the appearance of a revolving light, and were rewarded by seeing a pair of rockets go up together, followed by a salute of three guns at intervals of about a minute.

This was enough : after kneeling down for a final prayer with Pedro, I carried him off to his couch sound asleep, and too much overcome to think of or care for supper. I could not think of sleeping. All the events of my island sojourn flitted in mingled train before my mind, and regrets at leaving the spot where I had learned to know my

Saviour and myself struggled stoutly with the natural longing to be free, and to associate once more with my fellows.

I soon however convinced myself that it was as foolish as it was ungrateful to question the happiness which had thus been so unexpectedly bestowed upon me. I saw that I might have a work to do among men, and that at any rate in training Pedro, and perhaps in sending him or accompanying him one day to the islands of his countrymen as a messenger of the Glad Tidings, there was abundant occupation for years.

I had many little treasures to collect. I had also my aquarium to clear, as after securing the best specimens to carry with me, I thought it kind to put the rest back into their native ocean. I lay down for an hour or two before my usual hour for rising, and when Pedro awoke me by clamouring for something to eat, there was such a thick haze over sea and land that nothing could be seen of our friends. Pre-
however, a boom came from the mist,

as it seemed almost close to us. Pedro looked as if he wanted to cry, and clung to my side. I told him to shout with me, and our call was answered by a loud halloo, soon after which theplash of oars met our ears, and a boat grounded on the beach pulled by ten stalwart Englishmen. I must not dwell on the little incidents of their landing and taking us off, how they stared at my unkempt and shaggy appearance, and were enchanted with Pedro's vivacity; how they made a tour of my island, and took a sketch of the little settlement to accompany the account in their log; how the old mama-goat gave us an immense amount of difficulty before we could get her into the boat, and how—.

But I might run on into a volume. I must briefly say, that in cruising about among the islands of the South Pacific, the captain had heard a strange story of a boat having visited the scene of a new volcano, and there beheld the spirit of the fire-caves, to whom they had taken a child and a goat as peace-

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offerings. He had resolved to fathom the mystery, and hence our discovery.

All on board treat us as brothers. They are bound for their own England, and I am uncertain whether I shall accompany them thither, or return to my own country. God knows what He has in store for us. Into His hands we commend ourselves.

CHAPTER XII.

SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS, TO BE GIVEN TO
PEDRO, WHEN FIFTEEN YEARS OF AGE—
A GLANCE AT THE PAST.

I HAVE no recollection of my father, as he died from the effects of a severe cold, caught in travelling, before I was two years old. From a miniature portrait of him, which my mother always wore round her neck, I judge that he must have been more attractive than handsome. His features, taken separately, were not remarkable; but his expression of countenance was sweet and serene, and his fair hair and light complexion struck me as a singular and not unpleasing contrast to the dark hair and eyes of my mother.

My father was an artist by profession. His family had been possessed of moderate

property in Provenç, but being a younger son, he was obliged to maintain himself, and chose that occupation which promised to be most congenial to his tastes. I gathered from my mother that he had spent much of his early artist life among the Pyrenees, where he had injured his constitution by sitting too long upon cold rocks or damp trunks of trees, engrossed in his favourite pursuit. It was hard work, too, at first, struggling to live by his brush, and he afterwards allowed that he had passed many days on no better fare than figs and chestnuts, rather than throw himself upon strangers, or return disappointed to his family.

In the course of his wanderings he spent some months in the south of Spain, chiefly among the crags and passes, the mingled richness and ruggedness, of the romantic Sierra Nevada. This brought him to Granada, where he made the acquaintance of Senor Don Antonio Callera and his family. Don Antonio was very musical, and had also very good

taste in everything connected with pictures. Being a wealthy man, he purchased many of my father's paintings, and introduced him among his wide circle of friends.

This was outwardly a happy change for my father, but I have been told that he did not heartily enjoy the grand society of Granada, and but for a special cause, would soon have left it for a freer life among the mountains. That cause was the fact that Don Antonio's second daughter made a deep impression on the mind and heart of the young artist. Pellerina, that was my mother's name, (she told us this, bit by bit, the evening before we left Provence to take up our abode at Granada,) returned his affection, and in spite of the remonstrances of her elder sister, Pia, soon showed a marked preference for his society.

Don Antonio had not counted upon matters taking this turn. Why he should not at least have foreseen the possibility of it, I cannot make out, except that he had become engrossed in the pursuit of art as a recrea-

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tion, and politics as a duty, and had become so accustomed to see his children around him, that he quite forgot they might some day be inclined to possess homes of their own.

There were besides serious objections in his mind to my father's suit. Though brought up as a member of the Church of Rome, the Catholic Church, as I have been wont to call it, my father made no secret of his aversion to the corruptions and errors which flourished in her bosom ; and my Aunt Pia's dislike went so far as to secure for him the title of heretic, whenever he formed the subject of her conversation. Moreover, my father's political principles were decidedly "Progresista," or liberal ; and though he strongly upheld the cause of the few "Moderados," who tried to shape their course between the extremes of despotism on the one hand, and democracy on the other, his views were considered revolutionary by my grandfather and most of his friends. Hence arose so much opposition to the marriage proposed by my father, that he retired from Granada,

and taking ship for Magador, on the Morocco coast, he spent two or three years in travelling through that dangerous region.

Returning at length to his old home in Provenç, he learned, to his surprise, that letters had been for some months waiting for him from Granada, saying that Senor Don Antonio was dangerously ill, and much desired to see him. On reaching Granada, he found Don Antonio alive, but scarcely more. He had strength, however, to pronounce his wish, that his daughter Pellerina, whose patience and resignation had touched his heart, should become my father's wife. He also, by his will, left my parents a handsome legacy, on condition of my father's taking the family name of the Carreras.

I must not delay over the days we spent in Provenç. My father, as I said before, died when I was under two years of age; and my mother was left with my elder brother and myself to face the world alone. The income derived from my grandfather's legacy had been very much reduced by my

father's tedious illness ; and I can now understand well enough my dear mother's struggles to give us all the advantages she could, while avoiding scrupulously, and with beautiful self-denial on her own part, every unnecessary expense. By the kindness of my father's mother, whom I remember as a sweet-faced elderly lady, in widow's dress, and near whose house we lived in part of an old and fast-decaying chateau, my mother was kept from actual want, though she endured many privations. My brother Antonio was thoughtful and grave, and I could seldom get him to join in rambles on the hill-side, or games with our companions. To me all was joyous and free, and the only thing that subdued my bounding spirits was the hearing of our old troubadour lays sung to the guitar by my mother, in her soft foreign accent. I am not ashamed to say that these strains often brought tears to my eyes.

After living about eight years from the time of my father's death near his early

home, and the death of his mother having severed another tie to that endeared spot, my mother at length consented to accept my uncle and godfather Gonzalez' invitation to come and live near him in Granada. He had often pressed this, and offered my mother a house, rent free ; and promised help in the bringing up of her sons, if she would consent to take this step. My mother did not speak much to us of her plans—more, perhaps, to Antonio, who was four years older than myself, and was prudent beyond his years.

As I grew up, I discovered what had caused her unwillingness to return to Granada ; and I remembered, with deep regret, the many times when in my thoughtless and impulsive gaiety, I had added to her silent anxieties. I can recall, indeed, the few grave affectionate words with which my mother closed the conversation to which I have alluded, the night before we started for Granada. After gratifying our boyish curiosity by telling us about her and my father's attachment, and relating many little incidents of her own early life,

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and some concerning our relations in Granada, she put one hand upon each of our heads and said—"My sons, you are going into a new world: be humble—be watchful; you will find many snares laid for you, of which you have not dreamed here. Antonio, your mind will have new and rich feasts spread before it; while following out your wish to become a scholar, do not forget the common duties of your station. Gonzalez, you will find many flatterers. Be not only a butterfly, but a bee." Perhaps my mother traced a shadow of impatience on my brow. She kissed us, and led us in to bed.

Whether she herself went to rest at all or not, I cannot say. She looked pale and sad in the morning, and while I was delighted with the various little occurrences which enlivened our departure for the coast, from which we were about fourteen miles distant, she and Antonio cast lingering looks behind, and made but short answer to my observations. We had a longer voyage than we expected to the port

of Malaga, but I enjoyed it extremely, and was only sorry when it was over.

Everything was new to us in Spain ; and the little Spanish we had picked up from my mother at home was of small use to us at first. There was, however, one word which I had constantly impressed upon my memory. Wherever we went, whatever we were doing, that word seemed to haunt us. When Antonio had expressed on board a hope that the wind would change, "Patienza, Senor, *patienza !*" was the reply of the pilot. When my mother asked if our first meal on landing were not nearly ready, it being fully half-an-hour after its promised time, the waiter smiled graciously, and said, "Patienza, *Senora*," in a tone of polite remonstrance. The same magical word was all the answer I obtained, when I was tired of being shown about the streets and squares of Malaga, and asked when we should get home ; when the horses of the great lumbering coach, by which we were to travel to Granada, were allowed to paw, and snort, and

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curvet, a very long time, as it seemed to me, before the driver gave his crack, and we were off.

I fear this almost hourly "patienza," by which the leisurely Spaniards excused themselves from anything at all approaching to hurry, did not altogether succeed in making me as patient as I should have been. Well, it is a lesson for life, and life is not too long to learn it in. May my little Pedro learn it when he is young, and the lesson is easy to be learned, instead of waiting till he is old, and needs hard knocks to beat it into him.

That drive from Malaga to Granada is as fresh in my memory to-day as if it had happened but yesterday. It was exciting, indeed, to gallop up hill as we did, with runners shouting and cracking whips beside the horses; and it was my delight to watch the leaders turn round the sharp corner at this rapid pace, while their comrades were still toiling up to the bend of the road so bravely. The crags overhanging the roads, the tall pines, the olive trees, oranges, and

vineyards, castles on high precipices, and snow-white cottages beside silver brooks in the valleys, all have left their clear stamp upon my mind. The very passengers who shared the vehicle, during some, at least, of its stages, I can recall more easily, strange though it may appear, than I can the countenances of those I love best. Priests in abundance there were, reading, smoking, or chatting with those who sat near them ; some reverend-looking men, who took notice of Antonio, and asked him if he were going to the seminary ; some coarse and hard-featured, whom we were glad to see get down from the coach without their having got us into conversation ; and one particularly, a young, bright-eyed prior, who had travelled through Portugal and France, and had endless accounts to give of things which were small enough in themselves, but were full of interest to me.

At length we entered Granada, rattling through narrow streets, in which the houses almost met over our heads, across broad

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squares, with fountains playing in the centre, and processions pacing slowly past us. One gloomy building made me shudder as we drove beneath its shadow. It was the Audiencia, a public prison for different kinds of offenders, especially for those who fall into (supposed) errors of religion. A few more turns, and we stopped at the hotel of the Santissima Trinidad.

My uncle had sent a trusty servant to meet us, and begged that we would come at once to his house and refresh ourselves after our journey. The servant was, however, instructed to show us the way to our future home, if my mother really preferred it. This she certainly did, as after a night and almost a day on the top of the coach we were far from being in a state to appear at my uncle's table.

After a wash and some refreshment, my mother wanted us to sleep, but I for my part could not bring myself to lie down, when there were so many novelties to attract my attention. Antonio lay down, out of regard for our mother's wishes, and was soon

asleep. After exploring high and low throughout our new abode, which my uncle had made very comfortable, and which seemed to me a palace, I took my stand at the window, and watched the groups passing by. Next to the number of priests, monks and nuns, I was struck by the quantity of beggars, not only persons in rags, I mean, but women who, I should have thought, by their decent dress and veils, belonged to by no means a poor class in society. I remarked the quick, shuffling step of several dark-looking, shabbily-clad men, who were, I was told, Jews, and from what my mother had told us of their history, I could not help feeling sorrow for their lot.

At the corner of the street, which I could see better from the balcony, something was going on which I could not understand, and the explanation of which, by the old housekeeper Morena, was accompanied by many unheeded "patienzas." It was a kind of fair, which was being held, as I was afterwards told, the Fair of the Woman Thief, and I fancy there were both women

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and men thieves busy at work among the crowd, if it may be called thieving to sell cleaned-up shawls and coats for new unworn articles, furniture varnished over and rubbed up bright, as strong and serviceable for use, when it would stand no wear at all, umbrellas which will let in the rain on the first heavy shower, and bird-cages, trinkets, and statuary, which is worth a third of the price demanded. The particulars of this Feira de Ladra I became acquainted with to my cost, when on a later occasion I sallied forth to make some purchases out of a present my cousin Valera had given me.

That evening, as my mother sent word that she was not well enough to come up and visit my uncle, he came down with his son Valera, a handsome dark youth of about seventeen years of age. My uncle was not tall, but he was very richly dressed, and his slight figure was well set off by a loose cloak of purple velvet, adorned with several precious stones. Uncle Gonzalez took special notice of me, as being his god-child and namesake,

and I must confess my vanity was not a little flattered by his remarks on my looks, height, and intelligence. I was almost as tall as Antonio, who scarcely spoke at all during the whole time of my uncle's visit, while I chattered away, and he laughed heartily at my observations.

I did not like a remark which Valera made to his father about our dress, or rather the sneer which accompanied it. I was sure it was some ridicule of our country-made clothes, for my uncle immediately afterwards said to my mother, "I must send my tailor to attire your boys, my fair sister; they cannot appear in Granada in such guise as this." My mother, to my vexation, politely but decidedly declined my uncle's offer, upon which he began quite an argument with her about the difference between Granada and Provenç. My mother took it very quietly, and it was impossible to provoke a quarrel. I saw, however, that with all my uncle's courtesy and evident affection, he was so accustomed to having his own way in everything, that

he could not bear to be thwarted. My mother treated him with respect, and was most grateful for his kindness; but she held fast to her decision not to live beyond her means, and when my mother felt a thing to be right, no apprehension or persuasion could induce her to swerve from it.

There was something painful left as the impression of the first visit, and it made my mother's anxious look return with greater fixedness than I had before seen upon her countenance. I have dwelt at length upon these first impressions, because they come most vividly to my recollection.

After that evening, we were frequently at my uncle's house. Sometimes my mother went with us, but she did not seem at home with my uncle or his wife, who was a very fine lady, and very difficult to please. I could not make out what my brother felt, and often fancied him dull and unsociable, and thought neither he nor my mother understood or valued my godfather's kindness as he deserved that we should. At first Valera

made more of a companion of Antonio than of me ; but when he found that Antonio was strictly conscientious, and feared nothing so much as being drawn into disobedience of any kind, he turned quite maliciously against him, and caused him much annoyance and real pain by his cutting, sarcastic remarks. As Antonio went down, I went up in my cousin's esteem, and I was far too yielding, and too open to flattery, to keep a firm stand as my brother had done. I am sorry to say I shared with Valera in many acts of disobedience, and caused my dear mother many a tear from my untrustworthiness and disposition to fret under her authority.

I will not pause to describe these days, nor those which followed, when Antonio left for a seminary, at Barcelona, where he was to prepare for becoming a priest. I loved him when he was gone, as I had never loved him before. Oh, Antonio, forgive me my waywardness and selfishness ! May God enlighten thee, as He has graciously opened

my eyes. This was the period so sharply brought to my remembrance by the visit of my poor, wounded swallow. They were days of self-pleasing and hardening, to which I cannot look back without much shame and regret.

It was a good thing for me that Valera left Granada. He had been very unsettled in his purposes, and had given my uncle and aunt so much serious anxiety, that they were really thankful when at last he entered the army, and sailed for South America. I had fallen considerably, I fancy, in my god-father's esteem, from the symptoms I showed of spoiling, so that I was much less at Les Pinchas, my uncle's place, than before.

Nor must it be supposed that I was idle during all this time. I regularly attended a school in the Calle de San Martino, and though I had lost some time at first, I was now near the top of the first class. It was at this school that I first made the acquaintance of my friend, my good angel, Pedro dos Perlos. I was not much drawn to him till Antonio's absence at Barcelona, and Valera's

departure for South America, made me feel the want of a companion. At this time Pedro was enduring no little ill-treatment from a party of high-born boys in the school, partly because of his Catalan patois, though I liked the musical tone of this exceedingly, and partly because he was over-honest, perhaps, in avowing his opinions, which, little as we understood such subjects, seemed to be ultra-liberal in politics, and decidedly heretical in religion.

I cannot say I felt any particular sympathy with Pedro's opinions in themselves, certainly not with those he held on religious subjects. I was content with things as they were, and had little notion of taking the trouble to examine and prove doctrines and precepts which, as far as I knew, were believed in and obeyed by almost every person of learning and respectability, and vested on the sacred authority of the Church. But, at the same time, I was drawn to Pedro by the manliness with which he held his ground, and by the amiability and good

sense he showed in avoiding other sources of irritation, by joining heartily with those of our companions who were not too lazy to exert themselves in all the sports of the play-ground. He struck up a mutual friendship. My influence (for I was now sixteen) was very useful to him in the maintenance of his liberty, and I found in him a rich store of information, a sharp wit, pleasant companionship, and that quiet pursuing of what is right in conduct, which at once gained my respect.

Pedro sometimes touched upon the subject nearest his heart, and would fain have led me on to the truths which even then were, I believe, dawning upon him. But I was not inclined for this. While despising in my heart many of the plain absurdities of the National Religion, I yet did not desire to have a better. It was an instance of the heart turning away from God, when invited graciously to draw near to Him. I was much more ready to join Pedro in his longings after civil liberty, and I found myself imitating from time to time the earnest and

impassioned addresses he would make to a small knot of school-fellows, or even to an imaginary audience, on the evils of tyranny and despotism.

But I must be brief. My mother's health failed, and she was very anxious to see me starting in a profession. After much consultation, it was settled that I should become an "avocat" or barrister. Pedro was training for this, and he would have pursued that calling with undoubted, if not with brilliant success, had not he caught a low fever from frequent visits paid to the damp dungeons of the Audiencia, to converse with some Progressista prisoners, whose cause he was preparing to defend. It was absolutely necessary that he should entirely lay aside work, and recruit his shattered health.

I, too, was unhinged in my course of law-training, though not from anything being the matter with my health. Pedro had a sister, Juanita, about whom he was constantly speaking. She was not of his way of thinking, and trembled for the issue of the free-thinking

course, on which he seemed to her to have embarked. To see her was to be attracted, to be much in her society was to love her. She, however, talked of solving the problem of life by following in the steps of my Aunt Pia, now Abbess of San Pascual. The issue of all was, that Pedro's guardian promised to pay my expenses as well as his if I would accompany him on a long voyage for his health. In a few days we had bidden farewell to all in Granada, and were off to Cadis. We little thought, when we embarked on board the *Murillo*, for Manilla, China, and South America, that one was destined never to return to his country, while the other would pass a lingering exile of many years in solitude on an untrodden islet.



CHAPTER XIII.

A GLANCE AT THE PAST—*Continued.*

ISLAND.—I have hitherto shrunk from recalling the later incidents of our voyage. The recollection of my beloved friend's sufferings of mind and body, and the terrible impressions of our perils and final shipwreck, have hung over me like a nightmare. In sooth, I have sought to banish those painful memories altogether, at any rate till mind and body should recover a more healthy tone. I must try and be less morbid now, and fix some points of my narrative before they have faded from my mind.

Dos Perlos had apparently improved much in health, and was enjoying the change thoroughly. Our party (some of them very

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much set against my friend) had received an unexpected addition in the person of a middle-aged English gentleman, who had completed his term of service under the honourable East India Company's employ, and was returning home at his leisure by a somewhat circuitous route. I gathered that he had been engaged in the salt department, and had realised a moderate sum, on which he was purposing to live quietly with an only unmarried sister. He was himself a widower, and had left two sons, engaged in business, at Trichinopoly. I should once have called him a "bigoted heretic."

I did not at first take to Mr. Ommaney. He was evidently a very religious man, and, I thought, made a needless display of his religion. Moreover, Dos Perlos was very much taken with him, and I felt a little sensitive at the time and attention bestowed upon a foreigner and a stranger. This was selfish and narrow-minded, and I am ashamed of the spirit I indulged. I had, however, one ground of real apprehension, namely, that my

friend's health would suffer from excitement and discussion. The circumstances were these :—

Since we left China, there had been none of that irritation and petty persecution, which had been called out by the liberal opinions of Dos Perlos. The most bigoted of our "compagnons de voyage" had left, and while I doubt not my friend's mind was at work, and truth was as much his object as ever, still there had been for some weeks a calm in our social atmosphere, which had shown its traces in his spirits. In the evenings he had frequently regaled us with snatches on his guitar, and often enlivened the moonlight hours on deck with ballads and national songs. His voice was peculiarly rich; and I know not which suited him best, the well-known and popular stanzas of our old troubadour minstrels, or the original and inspiriting strains which he would pour forth, with all the fervour of an improvisatore. One of his songs I have recalled, and its melodies, though suffering from m-

feebler treatment, have solaced many a sunset on my palm-clad coral home.

I do not mean to imply for a moment that Mr. Ommaney's influence was at all directed against this or any other innocent recreation. On the contrary, he encouraged gymnastics and races up the rigging for the boys; was always ready for a row, or a swim, or a ramble on shore, when the captain's regulations allowed of it; and had an unending store of anecdotes and incidents to relate of Indian and English life. But at the time I felt my taste offended, when he passed from these lighter entertainments or conversations, with what I then thought too ready and irreverent familiarity, to subjects of deep and holy import. Having found most men indifferent to or insincere in religion, I doubted the reality of his profession, and was imperceptibly on the watch for little evidences of inconsistency.

Moreover, Mr. Ommaney, though a first-rate linguist, and long accustomed to our language in its colloquial form, had peculi-

arities of idiom and pronunciation which unfairly prejudiced me against him. To his Protestantism itself, of course, I had strong antipathies.

With Dos Perlos it was very different. He found in him what he had hitherto looked for in vain, a true and fatherly counsellor. It was as if they had been made for each other. Sorrow had made Mr. Ommaney a gentle and sympathising listener, and experience had provided him with advice or encouragement for most who came in his way. While firmly convinced of the truth of his own convictions, he was willing to hear both sides. He was no mere proselytising controversialist. Unsparring to the errors and evils of our Creed and Church; he made every acknowledgment of good points frankly and cordially, and made all allowance for education and habit in individuals.

A marked seriousness came over Dos Perlos, and I rightly connected it with the influence of Mr. Ommaney. The guitar was

gradually laid aside, to the dissatisfaction of many lighter spirits, and some others, too, on board. Dos Perlos was always in deep conversation with his friend, or in his cabin, or tired as with long study, and it was in vain, for a time, that I sought to get at his confidence. At length I discovered the special cause of his anxiety. I one day found him, after a fruitless search, lying back in the ship's boat, which was slung up high astern, reading some little volume, which he hastily put in his pocket on my discovering him. I insisted on a friend's right to know more of him and his heart and feelings than he had of late allowed me to share. In fact, I became a little warm in my expostulations, and accused him half jestingly, half in earnest, of forsaking an old attachment for a new one. He bore my rallying very pleasantly, and at last gratified my curiosity by showing me that very little Testament which has since been the choicest of my comforts.

I had been too much imbued with rever-

ence for authority, and a vague dread of heresy, not to be startled at finding my friend in the possession of the forbidden treasure. I returned it to him hastily, and asked him how he could venture to tamper with what might be his soul's destruction !

"Destruction !" cried he, starting up, while a flush covered his cheek and brow, spreading down his manly neck as far as his loose turn-over collar ; "destruction ! did you say ? I have been near that enough already, my dear fellow, to be frightened back by the warnings of intolerance, or the fie ! fie ! of priestly authority. I was near it in the days of my ignorant adherence to the 'vain traditions' of men. I have been equally near it, I now see, while my mind has been revelling in its newly-acquired freedom, and while I have dwelt on the ambitious hopes of becoming the Savonarola of Spain.

"I now see that freedom, true spiritual freedom, is not only the emancipation of the intellect, nor the triumph of political progress. These have been too much the objects

of my devotion. To their altar I have fallen in prostration—their laurels have I coveted. No, Gonzalez ; it is here," he added, laying his hand upon his heart, while a paleness as of death succeeded to the previous colour ; "it is here the chain must be snapped, and the new throne set up. Listen : '*If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*' (John viii. 36.) This is what I long for now, and the day."

I drank in his words with intense emotion, but I did not then comprehend their force. What he would have said further was interrupted by a sudden cough, and then, I shudder as I recall the scene, his white shirt-front was stained with a bright purple dye, that told at once what had happened, and Dos Perlos fell back exhausted into the sail-cloth on which he had been lying.

"Holy Maria !" exclaimed a voice beside me, which startled me before I had time to call, as I was on the point of doing, for aid. It was that of a young Cura, who had joined the ship, but a short time before, connected

with a college in Batavia. Froissard—that was his name—had been attracted by the animation of my friend's voice, though he was no eavesdropper, and I do not think had caught his words. The coughing, the expression of my countenance as I sat on the gunwale of the boat, and then the movement of Dos Perlos, had shown him something was the matter, and in a moment, spite his long and cumbrous attire, he was in the boat, and helping to raise the invalid.

I was utterly bewildered, but a second and decided appeal from Froissard brought me to my senses, and I was speedily returning with the doctor, for whom Froissard had sent me. The patient was carried to his cabin, where he was obliged to remain silent and almost motionless for a week or ten days, after which he sat up and seemed better. In a little time he appeared as usual, but the doctor charged him to be scrupulously careful, and Ommaney told me, on my pressing him, that serious injury had for some time been going on in the lungs without any one

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suspecting it, and that a similar attack to the late one might even endanger his life.

When allowed again to converse, Dos Perlos spoke in much despondency. It was evident he was passing through the depths of a terrible conflict. People who had known him as the advocate of the oppressed prisoners before the tribunals of our unhappy country might have supposed him to be a man whose mind was made up on points of the Liberal question in religion and politics, and who found excitement and pleasure in the assertion of his independence of authority. His speeches certainly bore that character, and they were enough to justify the opinion formed of him by the world at large. I now found, however, how little even I had really known him at heart. It was one thing to appeal passionately to principles in support of an injured client, another to bottom those principles by himself and for himself, in the hours of weakness and silence. It was one thing to denounce tyranny at the bar, and point out the abuses of authority by which

mind and conscience had been tortured and enthralled, and a different one to follow the thread of truth which his finger had caught as a clue, and abandoning apparently all previously held to be authority, pursue his solitary way over an unmapped, unsurveyed region.

Dos Perlos, in short, had two selves. The one, the fearless champion of liberty, we all knew, some admired, some feared, some detested. The other, the weak, up-looking child, crying for light and instruction, clinging to the cherished love of yet earlier days, even when convinced of its worthlessness—ready at any moment to sit at the feet of the teacher, rather than thrust itself into the seat of the master, daily losing the fond hope that the old creed and system might be purged, and a new spirit breathed into its decaying frame, and not yet grasping the promise that out of the death of the seed shall spring forth the life of the plant, itself again to blossom, and die, and live again,—this side of my friend's character was new and unex-

pected. It endeared him to me more than ever. I little thought what a depth of humility there was under the veil of outward self-assertion. Before, he was a being above me; now he was ready to take from me any grain of light or comfort which I, alas, was utterly unable to give. I ceased to blame him for leaving the beaten paths of our Church's teaching when I found what the influence of the little Spanish Testament, procured for him by Ommaney, had upon his mind and spirit. Yet I could not at all follow him then in the track his lonely spirit was pursuing. I too have found we must each sooner or later travel our measure of it alone.

It was a relief to me that Froissard, on the one hand, as well as Ommaney on the other, entered into such friendly discussions as our patient was able to bear. If ever the defence of our holy Church was conducted with ability, gentleness, and good faith, it was by the Cura Froissard. He was no Jesuit; he thoroughly loved and believed in the system

in which we and he had been alike brought up. Nothing could induce him to approach the ground insisted on by Ommaney, and very reluctantly and painfully adopted by Dos Perlos, that Rome has gradually undergone so entire a spiritual and doctrinal transformation as to have become a mere outward caricature of the Church of Christ and His Apostles. Hope, perhaps, for what he believed were the future glorious destinies of the Church, coloured his views of the present. In the calamities of our country he saw a wholesome chastisement, which would, he anticipated, free the Church from much injurious operation of causes connected with state management. In the same misfortunes, of which vague rumours from time to time reached us in our wanderings, Dos Perlos read more and more the hand of judgment. He could not now be satisfied, as was Froissard, with the hope that Ultramontane influences being weakened, we might see a more effective Catholic Revival than had been witnessed since the earlier centuries of Chris-

tendom. He seemed to hear the knell of what he had tried in vain to save, and his heart was already in the tomb of his fast departing aspirations.

I was surprised by Ommaney's frequent silence in our conferences. He got on with Froissard wonderfully well, considering their total disagreement on religious points. I think he must have felt they had a mutual bond in their evident, common, and almost enthusiastic personal attachment, if I may so call it, to the Saviour of Mankind, which overbore their many doctrinal differences. I was perplexed, and perhaps was the least at home, and to the others most unintelligible of the quartette, as we were familiarly called.

Meanwhile our voyage was progressing. We were bound next for the Mauritius, our late cruising having been in various parts of the Oriental Archipelago, including a visit to Sandalwood Island, to take in some samples for a home-contractor. Storms had driven us considerably out of our course, and we

were many degrees farther south of the Line than our captain had intended to steer. To the storms, which had been well weathered by our ship, but had told very seriously upon Dos Perlos's weak health, succeeded a calm of three or four weeks. There was some fear of our provisions running short, and though the captain would not hear of this, and made no apparent reduction in our table, we were put on reduced allowance of water, and in other ways there were signs of husbanding resources.

Some of the sailors began to prophecy mis-haps, or rather to revive hot debates which had been frequent at an earlier part of the voyage. It appeared that the *Murillo* had, some years before she came into her present line of trade, been a coaster in the Mediterranean. She had on one occasion been off Naples when the Pope was on a progress; and with most of the vessels then in harbour, she received the blessing of His Holiness. To some of the crew this benediction gave entire peace and satisfaction, nor could they

be brought for a moment even to imagine the possibility of disaster befalling the *Murillo*. Others, on the contrary, and more than I should have thought credible among a class so much attached to their traditional opinions, took quite the opposite view, and declared they had never known a ship blessed by the Pope which had not come to a bad end! There had been some bad blood upon this knotty point, warmed, I fear, by my friend's thoughtlessness or humour in now advocating one and now the other of these conflicting opinions. We had of late quite forgotten the circumstance. Perhaps the eventlessness of a long calm drove us to dwell upon trifles. At any rate, seldom a day passed but somebody or other alluded to the probable termination of our voyage by starvation, foundering, combustion, or some other of the numerous agencies which imagination, memory, or accident brought to our minds.

A colour was given to the predictions of some of the disputants by the occasional utterances of one of our passengers, Luiz

d'Ombrosio, Ex-professor of Mathematics at the University of B——, who was travelling, it was said, with the view of writing a book, to pay off the debts which had obliged him to resign his situation. He was a gaunt, silent man—silent, that is to say, as far as conversation was concerned; for he was very frequently engaged in a *sotto voce* monologue with himself, only short and fragmentary exclamations of which were allowed to reach the ears of those about him. The rest was lost in obscurity, and many were the guesses and futile surmises as to the subject of his abstruse meditations.

Of late, however, d'Ombrosio had become wonderfully animated, and was very eager in gathering from the captain, and those of the crew who knew these seas, such information as they could give respecting the usual tracks of ships, and the islands and rocks to be met with in their course. The captain at first seemed to hold the man of figures and letters very cheaply indeed, and was particularly sharp in refusing to gratify his appare^r"

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objectless curiosity. Observing this, it was not strange that we, who knew less of the matter, should look upon the professor as a strange and absurd individual, who was probably filling his manuscripts with all kinds of extravagant theories and perversions of fact, with which to astonish and mislead an ignorant public at home.

Much was the mirth excited by the manner and movements of d'Ombrosio among the crew at large, and patiently, I must say, did he bear the annoyances to which his conduct exposed him from the younger of the ship's officers and passengers. I have not, I am glad to say, to charge myself with a share in these; but I remember now and then expostulating with Mr. Ommaney, who made a point of showing respect to him, and who tried, by leading questions at mess or on the quarter-deck, to give him an opportunity of expressing his views more clearly.

By degrees d'Ombrosio appeared to gain more attention from the captain, and they might often be seen examining charts to-

gether, and taking observations with their instruments. It now transpired that the professor, or ex-professor, as I should call him, were it not so uncomfortably long an expression, had long been studying the question of the earth's shape and measurements, more especially in reference to navigation. He had had his attention drawn to the fact, that of the ships annually lost by various nations from foundering on sunken rocks, by far the greater proportion were among the ships of war, and government transports—the very class of vessels carrying the most accurate charts, and manned by most intelligent commanders. After much consideration and inquiry, he had come to the following conclusions :—

All charts, he observed, were based upon the earth's supposed measurement of circumference. It had been assumed by men of science, led by the discoveries of the English Newton, that the earth was so many thousand miles round at the equator. This number of miles had been divided into so many

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degrees, and each degree into so many nautical miles. Thus the unit of sea-measurement, the knot, or nautical mile, was an exact subdivision of the *supposed* sum total of miles, yards, &c., which the equator was calculated to contain. So profound had been the reverence for the results of scientific inquiry, as maintained by the followers of Newton, that no one had ventured, as years had gone by, to question the accuracy of these results ; and we were still taking implicitly for true, as the basis of all our practical directions and operations, principles laid down years ago, which ought at least to be tested and re-examined.

The professor went so far, when pressed, as to assert that we are altogether wrong in our supposition that the shape of this our globe is, according to established and now venerable authority, an oblate spheroid, or, in simpler words, "round, but somewhat flattened at the Poles." He could prove, he said, to demonstration, that instead of being thus orange-shaped in its proportions, it was

more probable, by far, that the lemon would give the fairer representation. The Poles, he thus made out, were more pointed than flattened, and the meridians, or circles of longitude, according to his notions, would be larger than the earth's greatest circle of latitude, viz., the equator.

No one was disposed to enter into the arguments of the learned mathematician, nor to inspect the folios of diagrams and problems by which they were supported. Some large bundles of them, however, he bestowed on Dos Perlos, and I have still a quantity saved in this way, the blank side of which will at least serve me for writing material.

However, the gist of d'Ombrosio's argument was, that the surveys regularly, and by highest authority, in use among mariners, all lay under the dangerous mistake of making out the earth's circumference at the equator *larger than it really is*. If this be the case, it follows that the knot, which is the so-many thousandth part of this supposed circumference, *is longer than it ought to be*; a

smaller number, *i.e.*, of our present measured knots, would girdle the equator than the amount we calculate to be necessary. The consequence will be this:—A ship sails from Port A—, on such a day, at noon. She has her charts accurately made out before her; her captain and pilot know that at such a point, distant so many reputed knots, there is a dangerous reef, rock, or shoal. They will reach the spot at such an hour, at present rate of sailing. But, meanwhile, each *real* space of sea, reckoned in the chart as a knot, being in fact a little *shorter* than it is supposed to be, the ship comes to the dangerous spot sooner than any one is warranted to expect! The rock is here, now, under her bows, at the moment when, by her charts, and the careful observations of her navigators, it ought to be still away in the *offing*! She strikes, and is lost—lost, not by neglecting her charts, but because with fatal, yet studied inaccuracy, those charts have guided her to destruction.

This was, as far as I can now recall it, the

burden of d'Ombrosio's harangue, as one delicious evening he was drawn out from his solitary half-abstracted meditations, and led, chiefly by Ommaney, to point out these perils of navigation. I have tried to put down the outline of his remarks, and have kept such of his papers as dear Dos Perlos had by him, in order that at some possible future day they may be submitted to more competent investigation.

There was some disquietude observable on the countenances of the little audience, as they began by degrees to comprehend the drift of the views propounded. The captain shrugged his shoulders, and made light of the matter before his crew. Froissard heard him, in going down the companion-ladder, remark to one of the mates that it made little difference to them, as they were now in latitudes where very few observations had ever been made, and, for aught he knew, there might be rocks, islands, or continents about, none of which would be found in the best maps in Madrid. Besides, if this calm

tinued, it mattered little where the shoals lay : we might all starve or die of thirst, before we ran aground on them.

The gloom which threatened to creep over us was dispelled by an impromptu dance, in which all thoughts of the future were quickly forgotten by the merry-makers, of whom I was persuaded to be one. Froissard went to vespers, Ommaney and Dos Perlos retired to the cabin of the former, I doubt not to read and pray. D'Ombrosio continued to pace up and down the quarter-deck, wrapt in meditation, and noways disconcerted by the mirth of his lighter-hearted companions.

At length, during a pause in the dance, the professor beckoned me towards him. No motion was visible on his countenance, but in a voice somewhat uncertain, he said : "Young man, your eyesight is good ; take this glass, and tell me if you see anything yonder."

The sun had just set, and there was a rich, clear glow on the horizon all round toward the west. To the eastward a haze was form-

ing, but before I had raised the glass to my eye, I caught for one moment a low, conical peak, just rising above the haze, which made my heart leap up at the thought of "land ahead!"

It was not indeed "land ahead!" for our ship's head was pointed N.W. at the time; but before I had time to consider I shouted "Land ahead!" at the top of my voice, and began an immediate ascent to the maintop, to the astonishment of the individual ensconced there. Had I called land astern! or land a-starboard! the look-out would in all probability have seen the peak, and confirmed the truth of d'Ombrosio's and my assertions. As it was, by the time I was at the maintop, and had directed him to the quarter where we had seen it, the haze had crept up to such an extent that nothing whatever was visible. I came down to find d'Ombrosio testily declaring that he had watched the object for some time before he had called my attention to it, not thinking the sun was so near setting. He was pooh-poohed, however, by

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most of the crew and passengers, and my testimony was thought of scarcely sufficient weight to overcome the improbability of the supposed peaks being anything more than a distant pointed cloud.

A breeze now sprang up unexpectedly. All was bustle and animation. The pleasure-seekers retired to supper and to sleep; the watches were told off; the captain walked the deck to see that a proper look-out was kept, and that no more canvas was unfurled than would keep us going at a safe, moderate pace.

That lovely starlight night, how often does it come fresh before me now, with its sense of beauty and repose, yet its foreshadowings of action, of apprehension! I stayed on deck till an hour after midnight, when the breeze was again going down, and the fresh ripple was once more settling into a calm.

I had been in my hammock some two or three hours, when I was rudely shaken from it by some violent, unaccountable shock. Half-stunned, I arose from the floor to hear those sounds and witness those sights of

which I had read so often, and with such eager enthusiasm when a boy,—the precursors of a wreck at sea !

All seemed full of contradiction. The sea smooth as a mill-pool, the rosy sky just smiling welcome to another “blue day” of life, the good ship’s masts and rigging all apparently in order as before, save that the mizen-mast had suffered some injury, and the captain was giving orders for its being cut away—the general impossibility of recognising any immediate danger, though all were aware some heavy shock had been sustained ;—all this contrasted forcibly with shouts and cries from between decks, and the sound of the heavy-going pumps, with the splash of the discoloured bilge-water as the stream poured forth from the hold. It contrasted, too, with the set countenance of the captain, and the more experienced of the crew, who showed by look, as well as action, that the peril was most imminent.

But I must not dilate. The same thing has been written a hundred times before, and

this is probably destined for no eye but my own. Enough for those who come hither and find me, or my unburied bones, to learn that each member of that ill-fated crew, and little company of voyagers, strove to do their duty nobly and unselfishly in that hour of mortal extremity. Some stood to the pumps till compelled to leave them on pain of being drowned at their post; some helped to apportion out the remaining available provisions to the three ship's boats, and the two rafts hastily knocked together by the carpenters. Few were entirely unmanned, though some were too bewildered to act sensibly for themselves, and some, a small number, foolishly and wickedly drowned their senses in brandy, and went down like sheep with the *Murillo*.

The captain and Ommaney wanted to force Dos Perlos into one of the boats, with one or two more of the sick in each. This he refused to allow, and it was with difficulty that he would consent to take a place on the first raft, where I immediately joined him, instead

of waiting, as he wished to do, to man the last with the captain.

Little was said, as we took up our positions within a few yards of each other, out of reach of the swell which we knew must accompany the fast-approaching disappearance of the ship. It was like a funeral procession, melancholy enough in its circumstances, and full of sad anticipations for the morrow. Still we were thankful that we had escaped thus far with our lives, and we were determined to do all we possibly could to fight out the battle.

We could not resist a cheer as the *Murillo* sank stern-foremost beneath the waves, and then the boats taking the two rafts in tow, we started on our hazardous expedition.

No traces of the peak of last night were to be seen. We steered, however, in that direction, with the vague hope of presently coming to land.

But I must forbear. My heart sickens now as I recall the successive stages of the bitter and terrible drama. Three days we

kept together. Then land being still undiscoverable, and a breeze having sprung up, we made sails for the rafts, and kept pace so well, that we got up some faint rivalry as to the merits of the different crafts.

In the night, whether from inattention to signals, or divisions of counsel, I cannot say, our little fleet separated. Hunger and thirst had already begun to tell on us, and impatience and recrimination added pain to our already disastrous circumstances. Our quartette was quite broken up. Ommaney had been put by the captain in charge of the second boat, which had gradually fallen astern. Froissard was on the captain's raft; and Dos Perlos and I were together on the other.

He shone as he had never shone before. Even his health and vigour seemed to rally for a time, and he was the life and soul of our little crew. It was he who suggested each improvement for navigating our ark, and relieving our handful of men by prudent husbanding of our strength. It was he who

checked my murmuring spirit, and bade me trace the hand of God in our deliverance from immediate death in the silent hours of night. It was he who, as hope died away, soothed the frantic ravings of the dying by messages of mercy from his now doubly-precious Testament. He pointed out now, with clearness and fearlessness, the folly of trusting to other mediators than to the Man Christ Jesus ; and though this was lost on me in my half-stupified condition at the time, it comes back to me with new power now, and I doubt not many a poor soul, sighing for the consolations of religion, found truer peace through his words than in the rites of Extreme Unction, administered perchance by Froissard to the sufferers on the other raft.

What became of the rest I never knew. One by one, our own crew died and were thrown overboard, Dos Perlos and I remaining to the last, and each bidding fair to go first. On the 11th day, I awoke from a swoon to find my beloved friend a corpse at

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my side, and the raft gently washing against the side of a cove on this island.

There is now his grave, and here am I a living occupant of a more capacious but no less solitary tomb !

THE END.

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